

# The Pit Privy



PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

ONE OF THE SERIES OF  
EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATIONS DIRECTED TOWARDS  
A HEALTHIER MANITOBA

## *F O R E W O R D . . .*

*This pamphlet is one of a series dealing with Environmental Sanitation and is designed to make available to the public of Manitoba the accepted modern practice.*

*The health of all individuals, young and old, is closely related to our own personal surroundings; the places in which we eat, work, sleep, and spend our leisure.*

*In varying degrees this environment may be under our control. The satisfactory disposal of human wastes, the provision of a good water supply, the control of flies and vermin, and the assurance of clean, safe milk - are a few examples.*

*Full-time Health Units are operating in many parts of the Province. In these Units technically trained personnel are available to offer you direct advice on these problems. If you should live in an area where a Health Unit has not yet been developed, this service may be obtained by writing to: the Section of Environmental Sanitation, Manitoba Department of Health and Public Welfare, William Avenue and Gertie Street, Winnipeg.*



## THE PIT PRIVY

Outdoor privies are not the most satisfactory system of waste disposal for home or school, but if no other means are available, toilet facilities may be provided in this way.

Before constructing a pit privy it is advisable to consult your local Medical Officer of Health or Sanitary Inspector. The construction and location of pit privies is usually controlled by local by-laws. In some built-up areas the character of the soil is such that the use of pit privies is not permissible and in other localities their use is prohibited.

The labour and costs involved in constructing a fly-and-rodent-proof pit privy are only slightly more than what is required to build a poor one. The planning of the structure requires intelligent thought. The following points should be borne in mind:

### LOCATION

The privy should be located at least 20 feet from any residence, store, restaurant, or other place where food is served or stored; not nearer than four feet to any lane or adjoining lot; and must be at least 50 feet from the nearest well.

### PIT

The pit should be dug narrow and deep and well cribbed to prevent caving in of the surrounding earth. The cribbing should be brought eight inches above ground level.

### FLOOR

A concrete floor is desirable and more readily cleansed. The slab should be approximately five feet wide, four feet long and five inches deep. It should be reinforced with 1/8" round iron, spaced one foot apart. It is a good idea to set a loop of strap iron in the wet concrete on opposite ends of the slab. A truck can attach a tow chain to this strap when it is found necessary to move the structure to a new pit.

### SEATS

The seat should be smoothly finished. A seat cover of self-closing design will help keep flies and other insects out. Concrete should be used in constructing the seat riser, utilizing a section of glazed tile pipe for the inside form.

## MATERIALS

Use good materials, clean sand and gravel, sound construction methods, and paint the building when finished. This preserves the woodwork and extends the useful life of the structure. The use of concrete for the construction of the floor and seat will be found less expensive than the use of wood for the same purpose.

Other materials required are shown on the diagrams on Page 4. The corner posts and boards used in the pit should be treated with creosote to preserve the wood.

## VENTILATION

Provide fine mesh screening over two or more openings, each ten inches square, in two opposite walls. In addition, a flue-type ventilator four inches square, of either wood or metal, should be installed extending from 1 inch below the floor to a point at least eight inches above the roof. The top opening should be screened.

## BANKING

The area surrounding the privy should be raised to a height of ten inches above the normal grade, and well tamped to exclude rodents, insects, and surface water.

## LIGHTING

Provision should be made for natural lighting, either by the installation of a window, or by enlarging one of the screened openings to 18 inches square.

## MAINTENANCE

The structure should be kept in a clean and sanitary condition at all times, and repainted as often as required. The seats should be scrubbed each day.

It is suggested that a box of dry earth be kept in the privy, and some of this material be added to the pit daily.

Once a week about a quarter of a pound of chloride of lime should be added, to discourage the presence of insect larvae.

The use of an insecticide, such as a 5% solution of DDT is strongly recommended. This may be sprayed over the interior of the building, with particular attention to the door, door framing, screening and other openings.

In this way, flies which are potential carriers of disease producing organisms, may be effectively controlled. DDT solutions are deadly, too, to the common mosquito.

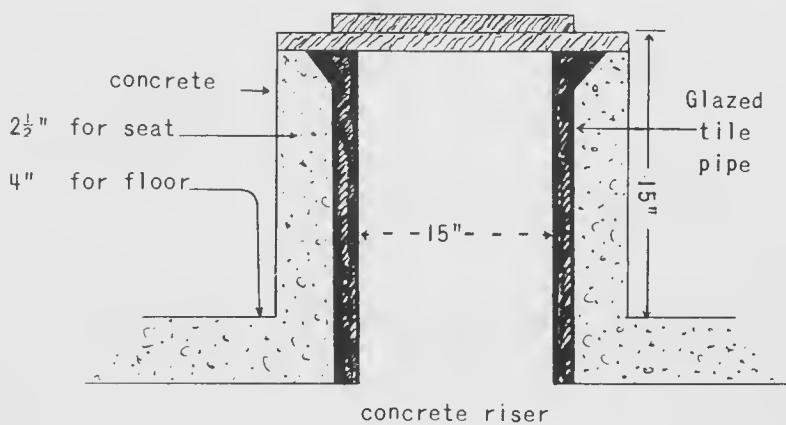
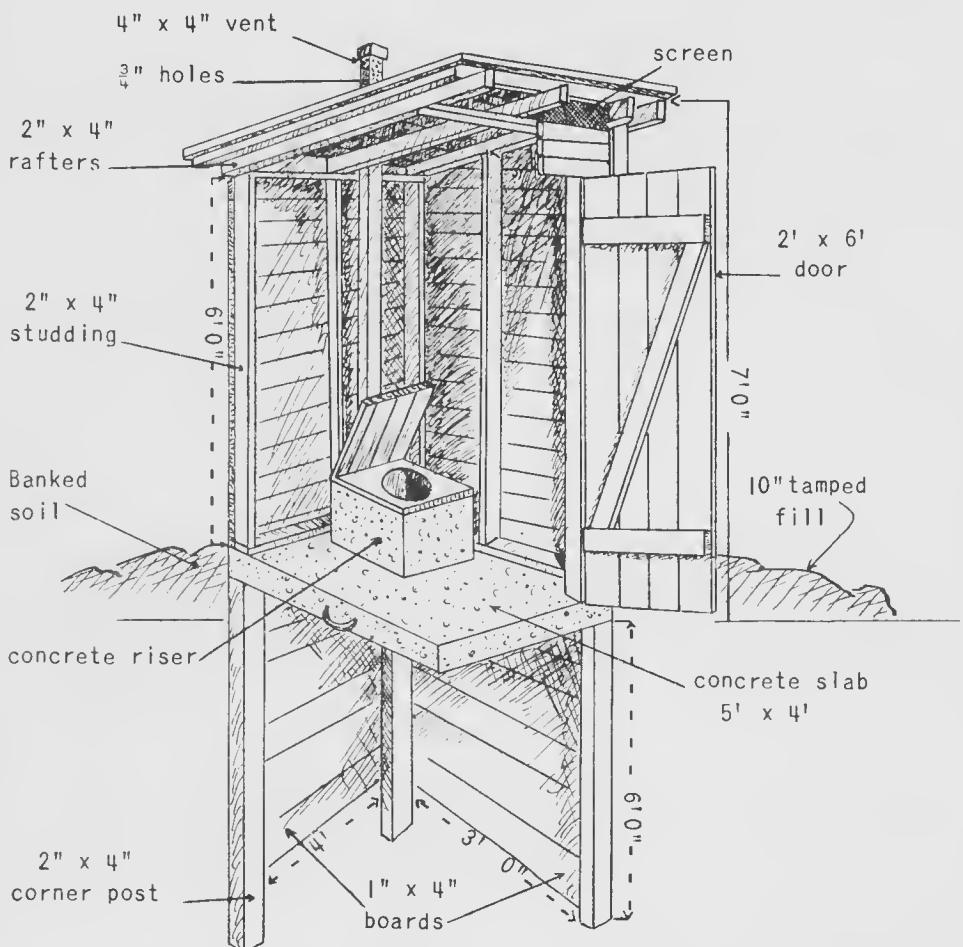
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By following the few instructions above, it is possible to have a sanitary privy which may be maintained in good condition with little trouble.

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*For further information contact the Sanitary Inspector at your local Health Unit, or write to the Division of Environmental Sanitation, Department of Health and Public Welfare, Winnipeg, Manitoba.*

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*This is one of the following series of publications  
directed towards a healthier Manitoba:*

*NO. I THE PIT PRIVY*

*NO. II THE SEPTIC TANK*

*NO. III HOME WATER SUPPLY*

*NO. IV SUMMER AND YOUR VACATION*

